

D-786
Winfield Webster Commercial Block
Vienna
c. 1915
Private

Although altered, this two-story, two-bay by four-bay building, now housing the Monument of Love Church of God in Christ, is a significant remnant of Vienna's early twentieth century commercial architecture with its surviving pressed metal façade manufactured by C. L. Mesker & Company of Evansville, Indiana. A contemporaneous Mesker produced pressed metal front in nearly pristine condition enhances the W. C. Bradley hardware store in Hurlock. (See D-339) Fixed at the bottom of the left pilaster on the Vienna storefront is the manufacturer's plaque.

Ownership of this Race Street property is researched back to the late nineteenth century when W. Spry Sherman held title to this parcel, and he is designated at this location on the Vienna town map printed in 1877. In 1912, his widow, Mina C. Sherman, sold a portion of the Race Street lot to Winfield Webster, who also acquired two other portions of nearby parcels over the course of the next six months. Behind the store building he operated a canning factory. The February 1912 transfer from Mina Sherman included a \$15 per month payment to her for her dower rights. In 1928, F. W. Higgins & Company, operated by partners Frank W. and Clarence Higgins, purchased the Webster store building and retained ownership until selling the business location to Russell and Alma Lewis at the close of World War II.

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-786

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Frank W. Higgins & Company, Winfield Webster Commercial Block
other Monument of Love Church of God

2. Location

street and number 213 Race Street not for publication
city, town Vienna vicinity
county Dorchester

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Monument of Love Church of God in Christ, Inc. c/o Rev. Benjamin F. VanZant
street and number P. O. Box 24 telephone
city, town Vienna state MD zip code 21869

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Dorchester County Clerk of Court liber PLC 256 folio 910
city, town Cambridge tax map 500 tax parcel 42 tax ID number 03-040364

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
☐ Other: _____

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	1
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> defense	
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	
		<input type="checkbox"/> education	
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	1
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	
		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion	
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	
		<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory

7. Description

Inventory No. D-786

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Now the location of the Monument of Love Church of God in Christ, this two-story, two-bay, rectangular frame building was erected around 1915 as a store fronted with a pressed metal façade produced by C. L. Mesker & Co. of Evansville, Indiana. Standing at 213 Race Street, the commercial block cum church is a prominent structure in the formerly active commercial district of Vienna, Dorchester County, Maryland. Facing southwest, the primary gable roof is oriented on a northeast/southwest axis. The exterior has been significantly reworked with an altered first floor front.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Monument of Love Church of God in Christ is located at 213 Race Street in the town of Vienna, Dorchester County, Maryland. The two-story, two-bay by four-bay rectangular frame building formerly housed the F. W. Higgins & Company mercantile enterprise and prior to that a commercial enterprise operated by Winfield Webster beginning around 1912. Dating to the early twentieth century, the frame structure is supported on a minimal brick foundation, and the exterior is clad with vinyl siding aside from the Race Street façade which retains a large portion of its pressed metal front manufactured by C. L. Mesker & Company of Evansville, Indiana.

The southwest (main) elevation has been altered on the first floor with a brick veneer across the entire front as well as a shed addition that extends to the northeast. Trimming the northwest corner is an original pressed metal pilaster anchored with the company maker's plate at its foot. Embossed on the plaque is C.L. Mesker & Co., Evansville, Ind. A double door entrance of modern doors pierces the center of the front wall. The second floor of the southwest elevation is covered with vinyl siding that frames two large single-pane windows that have been cut into the second floor wall surface. The outer edges of the elevation retain the pressed metal pilasters embossed with a stylized floral motif. Across the top of the façade is the pressed metal false front that disguises the gable roof form of the commercial block. The pressed metal is executed in a combination of patterns including concrete block and stylized floral forms. The edges of the façade are framed by the pilasters that extend to decorative capital forms impressed with floral motif decorations.

The northwest side elevation has been veneered with concrete block on the first story, which extends upward to a pent eave that stretches across the full side elevation. Four modern windows mark the second story, which is sheathed with vinyl siding. The edge of the roof is trimmed with an extended eave with sloped soffits.

The southeast side elevation of the two-story commercial block is covered by a single-story shed roofed addition partially built of concrete block. The second story is marked by three single-pane windows and an off-center door. The roof edge is finished with an extended eave finished with a sloped soffit. A shed roofed addition extends from the northeast (rear) façade.

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Name F. W. Higgins & Son, Winfield Webster Commercial Block
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 1

The interior was not open for inspection.

8. Significance

Inventory No. D-786

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/	<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates

Architect/Builder

Construction dates

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY

Although altered, this two-story, four-bay frame building, now housing the Monument of Love Church of God, is a significant remnant of Vienna's early twentieth century commercial architecture with its surviving pressed metal façade manufactured by C. L. Mesker & Company of Evansville, Indiana. A contemporaneous Mesker pressed metal storefront in nearly pristine condition is the one that fronts the W. C. Bradley store in Hurlock. (See D-339) Fixed at the bottom of the left pilaster is the C. L. Mesker manufacturer's plaque.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

Ownership of this Race Street property is researched back to the late nineteenth century when W. Spry Sherman held title to this parcel, and he is designated at this location on the Vienna town map printed in 1877.¹ In 1912, his widow, Mina C. Sherman, sold the Race Street lot to Winfield Webster, who also acquired title to two other portions of nearby property over the course of the following six months.² The February 1912 transfer from Mina Sherman included a \$15 per month payment to her for her dower rights. The extant building with its pressed metal front is estimated to date to the period after Webster's purchases of Race Street land and his transfer of the property to Frank W. and Clarence Higgins, trading as F. W. Higgins & Company, in February 1928.³ When Winfield Webster sold the Race Street commercial building he retained a right-of-way easement on the building's north side which led from Race Street to his canning house property in back.⁴ F. W. Higgins & Company operated in the pressed metal front building until it was sold to Russell and Alma Lewis at the close of World War II.⁵

¹ John L. Graham, ed. *The 1877 Atlases and Other Early Maps of the Eastern Shore of Maryland*. Wicomico Bicentennial Committee, p. 71.

² Dorchester County Land Records, WLR 4/593, 4 May 1912; WLR 4/267, 12 June 1912; WLR 5/359, 2 January 1913, Dorchester County Courthouse.

³ Dorchester County Land Record, JFD 21/471, 11 February 1928, Dorchester County Courthouse.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Dorchester County Land Record, RSM 56/206, 17 October 1945, Dorchester County Courthouse.

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Maryland Inventory of
Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. D-786

Name F. W. Higgins and Company Store, Webster Store Property
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

Frank W. Higgins & Company, (Webster Store Property)
213 Race Street
Vienna, Dorchester County, Maryland

CHAIN-OF-TITLE

Map 500, Parcel 42

PLC 256/910

Timothy L. Baylor, Trustee for the Free Temple Church of
Windsor, North Carolina

to

5.23.1989

Monument of Love Church of God

PLC 214/694

Edward H. Nabb, Trustee

to

5.29.1980

Timothy L. Baylor, Trustee for the Free Temple Church

Property foreclosure-sold at auction, 11.10.1979, \$7,500

RSM 56/206

Frank W. Higgins and Elfreida Higgins

to

10.17.1945

Russell Lewis and Alma Lewis

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Name F. W. Higgins and Company Store, Webster Store Property
Continuation Sheet

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JFD 21/471

Winfred Webster and Anna Mae Webster

to

2.11.1928

Frank W. Higgins and Clarence Higgins, partners trading as
F. W. Higgins and Company

...all that storehouse property in the town of Vienna....where at
the said F. W. Higgins & Company are now conducting the mercantile
business....

WLR 5/359

Richard James

to

1.2.1913

Winfield Webster

WLR 4/593

Mina C. Sherman, widow of W. Spry Sherman

to

5.4.1912

Winfield Webster

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Name F. W. Higgins and Company Store, Webster Store Property
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 3

WLR 5/267

Frederick H. Fletcher, et al (Letitia R. Houston, Mary L.Houston,
both unmarried and living in Salisbury)

to

6.12.1912

Winfield Webster

...being the same property which was conveyed unto one W. Spry
Sherman by S. Spry Jones, Trustee, by deed dated 23rd day of
February 1877 and now of record FJH 11/501....

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. D-786

Dorchester County Land Records, various volumes, Dorchester County Courthouse.

John L. Graham, ed. *The 1877 Atlases and Other Early Maps of the Eastern Shore of Maryland*, Wicomico Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 7,840 square feet
Acreage of historical setting 1 acre +/-
Quadrangle name Mardela Springs, MD

Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The metes and bounds of this property are coincidental with the current boundary of the lot.

11. Form Prepared by

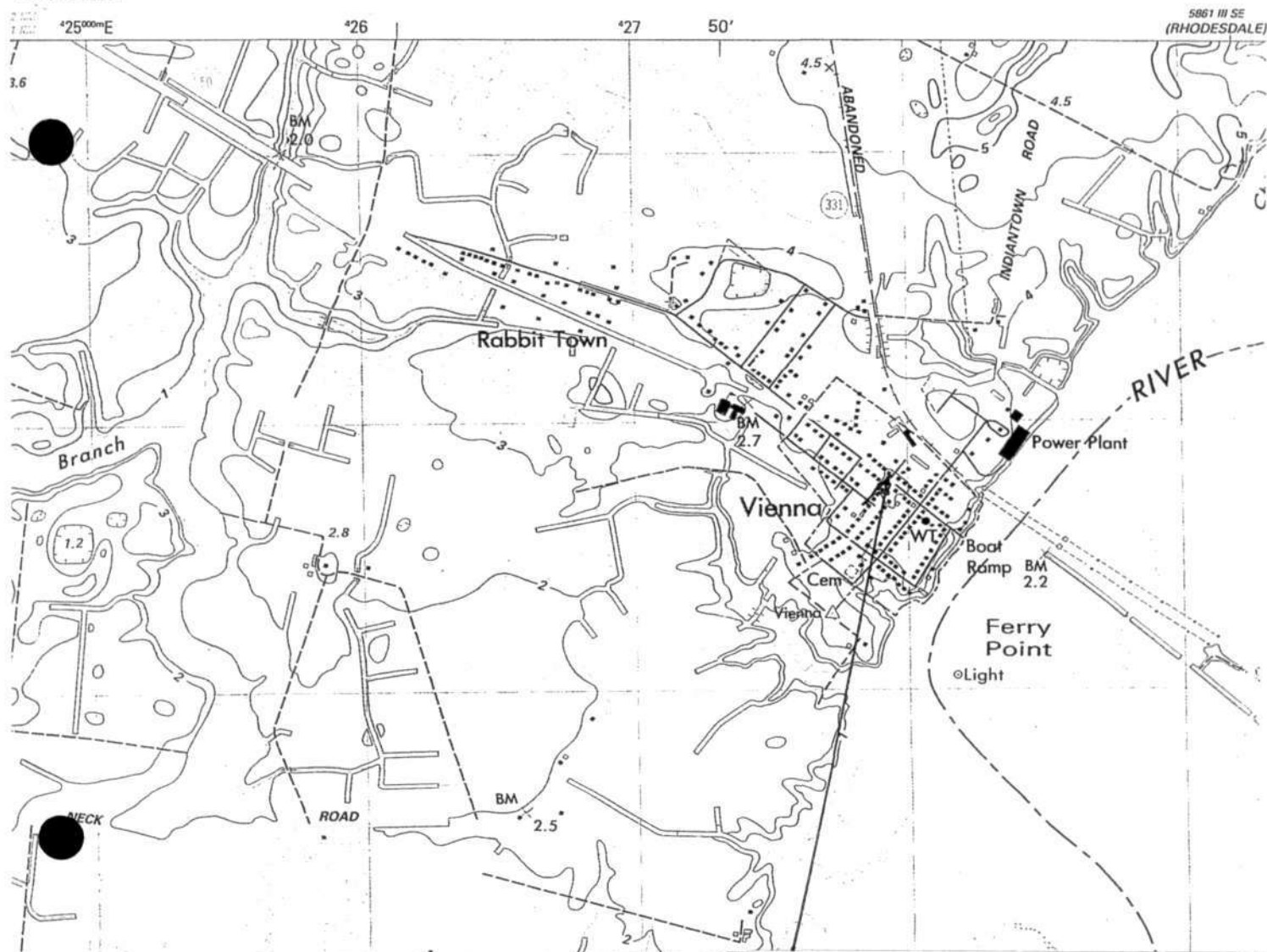
name/title	Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian		
organization	Chesapeake Country Heritage & Preservation	date	12/3/2010
street & number	P. O. Box 5	telephone	410-651-1094
city or town	Westover	state	Maryland 21871

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

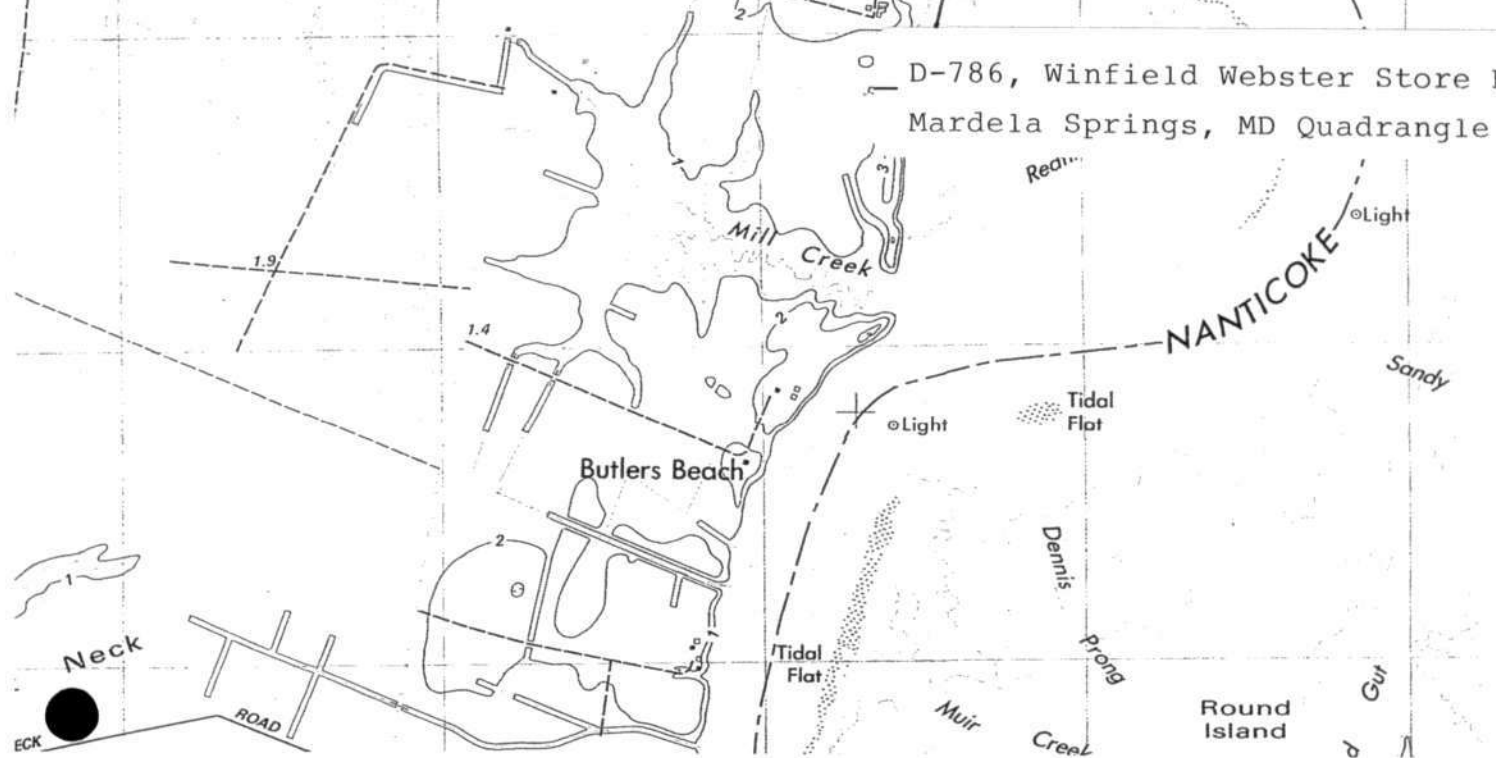
The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

SURVEY



D-786, Winfield Webster Store Bldg
Mardela Springs, MD Quadrangle





D-286

WEBSTER COMMERCIAL BUILDING
VIENNA, DORCHESTER CO., MD.

SOUTHWEST ELEVATION

12.2009, PAUL B. TONARI, PHOTO.
W&Z / MD. HISTORICAL TRUST

1 of 2



D-796

WEBSTER COMMERCIAL BUILDING
VIENNA, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, D.C.

NORTHWEST ELEVATION

12. 2009, PAUL B. TOWNE, PHOTOGRAPHER.
WETA / D.C. HISTORICAL TRUST

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